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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

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SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

January 26, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents and
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Sally Vaughn, Ph.D. *Sally*
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: Michigan's Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate

The Michigan Department of Education has updated the documentation required for certain pupil exit codes. The United States Education Department (USED) has reviewed Michigan's graduation and dropout documentation and found that the state's exit code documentation does not meet federal standards. If these standards are not met, state and local Title I funds could be in jeopardy. The USED has agreed not to take such action if districts implement corrective actions and come into immediate compliance with the No Child Left Behind High School Graduation Rate Non-Regulatory Guidance issued December 22, 2008. The guidance is located at: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/hsgrguidance.pdf>.

See question 27 on page 11. Generally, the federal guidance does not allow verbal statements about the movement of pupils and requires written, independent documentation.

The new documentation requirements apply beginning with all exits occurring in the 2011-2012 school year rather than with the 2012 cohort. The reason is that there are students in the 2012 cohort who may have exited in any of the preceding three (3) years, and districts will likely be unable to retrieve the documentation retroactively.

Attached is the updated Acceptable Exit Status Documentation table with the changes highlighted. The MDE is working with the Center for Education Performance Information (CEPI) to update the applicable section of the Pupil Auditing Manual. Please forward this updated table to your pupil accountants and pupil auditors so that they will be aware of this immediate requirement. CEPI will forward this to the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) authorized users.

Questions regarding the content of this memo may be directed to Kathy Weller, Director, Office of Audits, at wellerk@mi.gov or 517-335-6858. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance

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ACCEPTABLE EXIT STATUS DOCUMENTATION

Exit Status	Definition	Allowable Documentation
01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 20, 21, 40, 41	Graduated or completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official transcript or diploma. • Official alpha list of graduates/completers from the student management software which includes pupil's name, UIC, date of birth and SRSD completion status. Sorted by building, then by completion status then by pupil's last name.
09	Moved out of state.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for student records from a receiving public or private high school or an educational program (that culminates in a regular high school diploma). • Written record of a response from an official in the receiving school or program acknowledging the student's enrollment. • For migrant pupils, documentation of student's out of state enrollment in the federal Migrant Student Information Exchange (MSIX). • Note: The USED has ruled that a conversation with a parent or neighbor of a student, for instance, is NOT considered official written documentation of a transfer. The one exception is that if a parent informs a school administrator that the family is leaving the country, the school administrator may document this conversation in writing and include it in the student's file.
12	Deceased	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation from student management software that student is listed as deceased in the software. • Obituary, other newspaper article. • Program from the funeral/memorial service. • Written statement from the parent or guardian. • Death certificate.
14	Enrolled in home school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written parental statement. • Pupil withdrawal form signed by the parent/guardian or qualified student indicating pupil is being home schooled. • Parental record request confirming pupil

		<p>is homeschooled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement by attendance officer (truancy officer) verifying that compulsory attendance requirements are met. • Note: The USED has ruled that a conversation with a parent or neighbor of a student, for instance, is NOT considered official written documentation of a transfer.
15	Enrolled in nonpublic school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for student records from a receiving public or private high school or an educational program (that culminates in a regular high school diploma). • Written record of a response from an official in the receiving school or program acknowledging the student's enrollment. • Note: The USED has ruled that a conversation with a parent or neighbor of a student, for instance, is NOT considered official written documentation of a transfer.